

Town of Plainfield
Select Board Meeting: Public Hearing
February 26, 2018
Approved Minutes

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), George Cushing (Resident), Allan Farnham (Resident), David Strong (Friends of the Town Hall Opera House), Tammy Farnham (Resident), Becky Atchinson (Resident), Bob Atchinson (Energy Coordinator), Melinda Vieux (Resident), David Montgomery (Resident), Alice Merrill (Town Grant Administrator), Paula Emery (Resident), Bram Towbin (Road Commissioner), Andy Robinson (Resident), Rose Paul (Resident), George Springston (Resident), and Gary Graves (Deputy Fire Chief).

PUBLIC HEARING

- Acting Chair Ross Sneyd called the public hearing to order at 7:02pm.
- Sneyd noted that the two items slated for discussion at this public hearing will be on the Australian ballot at Town Meeting: 1) Validating and Confirming Fire Truck Bond; and 2) Financing Purchase of Gallison House to Provide Town Hall Opera House Parking.
- The first item discussed was Financing Purchase of Gallison House to Provide Town Hall Opera House Parking. Friends of the Town Hall Opera House Secretary David Strong spoke in support of the purchase, explaining both the need for and commitment in the Town Plan to seek additional parking for the facility. Discussion followed with a number of residents, including Select Board member Alexandra Thayer, noting their opposition to the purchase for reasons including: the loss of tax revenue if the Town owns the property; the high cost the Town will pay per parking space; additional costs to the Town beyond the purchase price; the lack of transparency in the process; possible use of the Park and Ride for event parking; possible loss of frontage on the property if the State does work on the US Route 2/Main Street intersection; State regulations that come into play regarding parking lots of a certain size; water runoff problems at the back of the property; and continued safety issues related to pedestrians crossing US Route 2 from the property to the Town Hall Opera House. Sneyd noted his support for the purchase, including seizing the opportunity to make Plainfield more attractive to visitors, the effect of slowing traffic, and demonstrating to the State that Plainfield is serious about revitalization. Strong noted that if the Town owned the property and a developer got involved, tax credits and historic preservation grants might be applied toward the renovations to the building. Others spoke on Town Meeting Article 2, including George Cushing who opposed the article, Alice Merrill who asked about the status of planning relating to the building and/or lot following the vote, Allan Farnham who discussed the possibility that future improvements to Route 2 might result in taking part of the land of the Gallison House, Bob Atchison who raised questions regarding Agency of Transportation requirements relating to curb cuts and widening of Route 2 for a deceleration lane that might be part of future changes to US Route 2 that could encroach on the Gallison House property. Bob Atchison also spoke about the need for parking spaces for the use of the building occupants if the property were used for housing. Paula Emery raised concerns about the loss of historic buildings on Route 2 and that making it more likely that future changes in Route 2 would be more like an interstate going through town, and also suggested

various uses of the Gallison House building. Andy Robinson raised the possibility of the town buying the property and leasing out the building to bring in income. Bram Towbin stated his opinion that rehabilitation of the Gallison House building would be cost prohibitive.

- Sneyd provided clarification on why Validating and Confirming the Fire Truck Bond was an item for consideration at this public hearing and on the ballot at Town Meeting, noting that the advertising prior to the vote at last year's Town Meeting to bond the fire truck was not in compliance with the means in which the truck would be financed.
- The public hearing was adjourned at 7:48.

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AGENDA

- Review Agenda
- Public Comment/Announcements
- Town Clerk's Report: Warrants, Etc.
- Road Report
- Parking Ordinance
- Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Website Update
- Outstanding Invoices
- Other Business
- Review Minutes
- Adjournment

REVIEW AGENDA

- No changes were made to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sneyd reminded that Town Meeting was coming up on 3/6/18 starting at 10am at the Town Hall Opera House. Polls are open from 9am to 7pm.
- Thayer announced that people are still needed to help count ballots. Those interested should contact Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells.
- Sneyd noted he was not available for the first Select Board meeting following Town Meeting and requested that it be delayed to the third week of March when the second regular meeting is scheduled and all members can be present. Thayer was not in favor of delaying it, but agreed to think about it.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT: WARRANTS, ETC.

- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells presented a notification by the Development Review Board of a public hearing and historic site plan review on 3/14/18 for the River House. The Select Board needs to be notified because Town property abuts the River House.
- Wells requested that the minutes from two special Select Board meetings, one on 1/3/18 and one on 1/25/18, need review and approval.

- Wells presented the Certificate of Highway Mileage for Select Board approval to be signed and submitted to VTRANS. There are no highway mileage changes from last year, which remain at 41.698 miles of road for the entire Town and 3.04 miles of Class IV roads. **Sneyd made a motion to sign the Certificate of Highway Mileage for the year ending 2/10/18. The motion was approved.**
- Wells requested that the Select Board approve the Promissory Note and Security Agreement with the State of Vermont for the new Highway Department truck. Road Commissioner Bram Towbin stated that the truck is scheduled to arrive by 3/20/18, but additional time is needed to outfit it, thus it will not be ready for use until April. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the Promissory Note and Security Agreement for the new Town highway truck in the amount of \$100,000. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the warrants of 2/13/18, 2/13/18, 2/16/18, 2/22/18, 2/23/18, 2/26/18, and 3/2/18. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the following Fleet Permit applications with all the attendant conditions included:**
 - **Allen Lumber Company. The motion was approved.**
 - **Scott Brown. The motion was approved.**
 - **Chevalier Drilling Company, Inc. The motion was approved.**
 - **Dwight and Laura Denton. The motion was approved.**
 - **Gould Well Drilling. The motion was approved.**
 - **Hillcrest Trucking and Storage. The motion was approved.**
 - **John Bogie, JFB Trucking. The motion was approved.**
 - **United Natural Foods. The motion was approved.**
 - **Winterset, Inc. The motion was approved.**
- Wells noted that absentee ballots are available for those who cannot make it to the polls on Town Meeting Day.

ROAD REPORT: WINTER PARKING POLICY, NEW SIGNS

- Road Commissioner Bram Towbin reported that Town roads are getting softer earlier than usual and asked that people use common sense when driving on dirt roads by being aware of the conditions.
- Towbin announced that the winter parking regulations signs have arrived and will be installed soon.
- Towbin requested that people not climb on the sand pile by the Town Garage.

PARKING ORDINANCE

- Thayer and Sneyd reviewed the amended language in the draft Parking Ordinance that included suggested changes from the Constable. Additional changes were discussed prior to agreeing on the language for the final version. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the amended Plainfield Traffic Ordinance as prepared by Thayer. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to hold a public hearing on the Traffic Ordinance on 3/26/18 prior to the Select Board meeting. The motion was approved.**

WEBSITE UPDATE

- Webmaster Kathy Bizzoco provided an update on the Town's new website. Bizzoco noted that there appears to be a lot of visitors from Russia and China to the site. Sneyd noted that no tax records or

identifying information is included on the site. Thayer stated that while a lot of information has been added to the site, there are still areas that need additional text. Towbin commended Bizzoco for all of her work on the website to bring to fruition an effort with which the Select Board has been involved for quite a while. Thayer noted that anyone with a good photo of Plainfield that they would like to share should submit it to Bizzoco.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE

- Thayer reported that she and fellow Hazard Mitigation Committee (HMC) member Michael Billingsley are working on the draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan update. HMC member Bram Towbin noted the HMC will be updating the Select Board on the problematic maintenance issues at the Marshfield Dam, including outdated manually gated technology and no power back-up systems.

OTHER BUSINESS

- There was no other business to discuss.

APPROVE MINUTES

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the special Select Board meetings of 1/3/18 and 1/25/18 as written. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/12/18 regular Select Board meeting as written. The motion was approved.**
- Thayer noted that minutes recorder Cindy Wyckoff is now posting the draft and approved minutes from Select Board minutes to the website and Thayer is posting the agendas.
- Thayer expressed her frustration about the proposal not to have a Select Board meeting on the second Monday in March. It was decided that despite Sneyd's absence, the Select Board meeting on the second Monday in March will be held.

ADJOURNMENT

- **Sneyd made a motion to adjourn at 8:40pm. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff